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Spy trouble shows weakness of allies

By CARL T. ROWAN

IN THE midst of the second devastating spy revelation of this generation in West Germany, not to mention the frightening "Walker spy case" in this country, I want to warn Americans that Soviet espionage agents could be dragging us down the road to our destruction.

It is not just that we suffer the disadvantages of being an open, democratic society in which Soviet agents move about with impunity, bribing, stealing, blackmailing and seducing key Americans into handing over to Moscow critical bits of information.

Whether he meant it or not, President Reagan talked of sharing with the Soviets whatever we learn from our "Star Wars" research.

The grim reality is that the Soviets need no gift from Reagan.

Whatever we learn in trying to fashion a "strategic defense initiative" will be known by the Russians within hours of our discovery, especially if we transfer this critical new information to U.S. allies in Great Britain and West Germany.

The evidence is overwhelming that to give life-involving information to either Britain or West Germany is to compromise the freedoms, even the lives, of millions of Americans who have committed themselves to warring on the Communists.

Which is to say that the U.S. may want to reconsider a policy of relying so heavily, because of common racial heritage, on European allies in NATO and other arrangements to guarantee the security of the Western world.

America used to rest almost unquestioningly on a number of alliances conceived by John Foster Dulles.

There was SEATO, the Southeast Asian Treaty Organization, involving the Philippines, Pakistan and others; CENTO, the Central Asian Treaty Organization, embracing Iran, Pakistan, Turkey and others; ANZUS, a defensive arrangement between Australia, New Zealand and the U.S.; and then NATO, the linchpin of the Western world's plan to block the expansion of communism into Europe, Asia,

Africa and, most of all, the U.S.

But now SEATO is dead, like CENTO; and with New Zealand barring U.S. ships carrying nuclear weapons and the U.S. assailing that tiny Pacific nation, ANZUS is little more than a laugh.

But NATO? Americans in both Democratic and Republican administrations refuse to believe that it is moribund at best, and a Soviet-manipulated instrument at worst.

U.S. officials here look askance at journalists or others who ask why, 40 years after the end of World War II, the U.S. must have 185 bases and 249,753 troops in West Germany; 18 military bases and 28,964 U.S. military men in Great Britain; nine bases and 14,653 soldiers in Italy.

They don't want you to know that for four decades the U.S. has given Western Europeans such a crutch that they don't much give a damn about building up their own defenses, or setting up their own reasonably impenetrable security systems.

Britain, with its scandals

involving Kim Philby, Donald Maclean, Guy Burgess and others, has been a sort of direct conduit between U.S. military and intelligence agencies to the Kremlin.

There are claims that a former head of Britain's most sensitive intelligence agency was a Soviet "mole" for 30 years and may have been the most damaging spy in the history of the Western world.

And West Germany? In 1974 Chancellor Willy Brandt was forced to resign when a top aide, Gunter Guillaume, was exposed as an East German agent.

Now the government of Helmut Kohl is devastated by revelations that Hans Joachim Tiede, the man in charge of tracking East German and other Soviet-bloc spies, the man who trapped Guillaume, has himself defected to East Germany, probably putting in great peril the lives of countless intelligence agents from the U.S., West Germany and other Western countries.

NATO cannot be worth a damn when this kind of pro-Communist treason occurs in West Germany, the United Kingdom and other

NATO countries.

What is NATO really worth when no meaningful secret can be transmitted to governments that include devout Communists, or leftist dissenters, including Spain, the Netherlands, France, Italy, Greece, Portugal and more?

The U.S. has a colossal disadvantage in having to treat suspect European governments as equals, sharing with them grave secrets, while the Soviets treat Poland, Czechoslovakia and other Eastern-bloc countries as slaves, telling them nothing that the Kremlin is reluctant to reveal.

I say that it is time for the U.S. to say to Western Europe:

"We're closing our bases, bringing our troops home, leaving you to decide whether you really want a collective deterrent to Soviet aggression.

"We are leaving you to decide what you are willing to pay, and how hard you want to work, to maintain alliance-saving security."

The sooner U.S. officials get the guts to take such a stance, the sooner we will put some clamps on Soviet spies.